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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly's Accreditation Extended 10 Years – the Maximum Allowed

University praised for improving graduation rates

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Citing Cal Poly's improved graduation rates and praising the faculty and staff's focus on students despite major reductions in state funding, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) has reaffirmed Cal Poly's accreditation for the next 10 years, the maximum allowed.

In notifying the university of the 10-year extension, the accrediting association commended Cal Poly "for making significant progress in numerous areas" even as the university experienced "major turnover in the top leadership positions." WASC added, "In spite of all of these leadership changes the institution continued to show continuity of mission while simultaneously looking forward to the future."

WASC commended the university for significantly increasing its six-year graduation rate, ensuring effective academic advising, and establishing programs that promote student success. WASC also praised students for choosing to invest in their own education by voting in favor of the Student Success Fee last spring, which will support Learn by Doing activities, increase course offerings and expand student success opportunities.

WASC also offered recommendations for improvement, urging the university to find ways to increase the diversity of faculty, staff and students and improve the campus climate. The commission asked Cal Poly to continue its university learning assessment efforts, which the commission commended. Cal Poly will submit an interim report on progress in these areas in spring 2015.

Regional accreditation means outside reviewers have determined that Cal Poly provides a high-quality education consistent with its mission. Accreditation is essential to universities, because it allows students to seek federal financial aid and ensures that their coursework will transfer to other universities and colleges.

During the five-year accreditation process, the students, staff, faculty and administrators conducted an extensive self-evaluation of the university that included two visits by an accrediting team. The commission considered the team's recommendations and met with the university president before reaching a decision.

"WASC's reaccreditation decision reaffirms Cal Poly's reputation for excellence and acknowledges the extraordinary value of our Learn by Doing approach," said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. "This decision recognizes the commitment and excellence of our students, faculty and staff, and reassures our alumni that the value of their Cal Poly degree will continue to appreciate over time."

For more information on Cal Poly's accreditation process, please visit: www.wasc.calpoly.edu.

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